THE

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Mirantur taciti, et dubio pro fulmine pendent.
STATIUS.

In dubious awe, the trembling nations stand,
Pause, gaze, and wonder at the mighty hand.

Of the vast variety of personages, whom interest, vanity, or curiosity, drive from their native shores to other climes, although many pronounce their decisions from the impulses of prejudice and national antipathy, yet the majority will speak from the natural

dictates of the heart. Those who look for pleasure, and are so fortunate as to find it; who experience in the customs of the land, for the sight of which they have relinquished the habitations of their youth, all that their expectations had anticipated, and their hopes had conceived; are forced to acknowledge the satisfaction they have obtained, and in feeling happiness, to praise its source.

We need not, neither do we intend, to go further in the illustration than the land in which we have the fortune to dwell; than which there is not a nation on the face of the habitable globe, which contains within its expansive bosom a greater variety of individuals under the same species. The polished European, the tawny Asiatic, and the sun-burnt African, hurrying in multitudinous shoals from their native fields, fly as to an attractive centre, to this mighty receptacle of nations: and the judgment which is formed by

this wide diversity of people, is nearly ~~in~~ the same in reality and in effect. Though our faults, like those of our contemporaries, glare out like the light of day; yet, in some way or other, after we have been tried, and weighed, and sifted in the balance, there is something which operates unseen, with irresistible energy in our favor. Whether the national institutions be calculated for permanent and vigorous power, is a question which it is not our desire at present to touch: but that the individual members of the commonwealth enjoy under them a tranquil happiness, and display themselves to an enviable advantage, must be allowed by the feelings which strike ~~the~~ involuntarily upon those, who have sufficient perception to notice the shades of our common character. The foreigner, when he lands upon our shores, beholds a people differ-

ent from any that have ever yet presented themselves before him. Generally ignorant of what he is to find when he arrives; commonly much below the mark in his conceptions of our rank in the scale of improvement; he seems bound, at the first season of surprize, with a chain of magical enchantment. The fearless audacity, the wild independence, which are the principal ingredients in the whole, face an impression which it would be impossible to describe: and the contemplation of our general appearance, after all that can be said and thought leaves, not the rancor of bitterness and hatred, a even the ammum of partial prejudice; but the swell of kindling rapture, and the ardor of involuntary admiration.

One of the principal marks

of difference which strangers, and, indeed, the natives themselves, cannot fail to observe, between the character of Americans, and that of the inhabitants of other countries, is. that shrewdness of perception, and keenness of intelligence, which seems to pervade every rank of the people, and to operate with universal influence. The maxims which the hoary sire instils into the bosoms of the rising generation, to whatever sphere their labors may be confined, are calculated in their very spirit and essence, to give a freedom to ~~spe-~~ mind, ~~ak~~, and an energy to action, which neither time can quench nor opposition can impair. They seek not, for they are never taught to expect, that the comforts which they do not purchase by individual labor, ~~will~~ may be supplied by foreign bounty, and adventitious aid: each exalts himself to an equal dignity with his neighbor; and none being fettered by the degradation of reliance on any exertions but

those which himself can make, the mind rises in conscious vigor above the dangers with which fortune darkens the road of life.

It is curious, and in most cases, laughable to observe, how the demagogue of a party faction, the learned quack, the popular enthusiast, the noisy politician, and even the very buffoon of public eminent, after fuming and fretting in their native land, till every corner resounded with their ~~declamations~~ praises; cross the Atlantic wave, reach the borders of the western world, and the veil of oblivion covers at once their actions and their name. They are left to rave at leisure, till disappointment shall chill the fire of their impetuous vigor: and the multitude that is buried around, neither stops to lend them an ear, or surfeit them with empty acclamation. This is particularly to be noticed in the emigrants from our mother country, for purposes of interest founded upon expectations of public favor. It has been the chance

teristic distinction of our English mob, from time immemorial, that they are always ready for seizing upon any object of tumultuous uproar, momentary wonder, or boisterous mirth, under whatever form these uncouth pleasures are conveyed. It is thus that fuel is supplied to nourish the inward animation, which burns with more strength than moderation, in the bosoms of our British brethren. But here, the native cunning of the inhabitants of our land, is too strong for subjection to the dupes of the hot-headed madmen, that come over, after having lived their day on the other side of the water. The dragons of jacobinical discord, and revolutionary confusion, who, after flying from the arm of inflexible justice, have set their feet among us as new subjects for their experimental labors, have sunk like magic from the scene, as if blasted with the mildew of death:

and, doubtless, many of those restless spirits that are now hidden in a corner, in this region of universal equality, would gladly resort to their ancient domicil within the walls of Newgate, where their lampoons would never be neglected, nay their very existence be a thing unknown.

It must be confessed, however, on the other side of the question, that the very same independence of feeling and character, which quickens into such active intelligence the mental powers of our countrymen, operates upon the social qualities in rather too pernicious a way. The same consciousness of individual freedom which gives such ample scope to the exertions of the genius, generates a sort of brutal indifference, and selfish apathy, which borders more upon the savage than the civilized state of being. Perhaps a little more deference to superior intelligence

and loftier station, in the lower orders of our people, would shed a ray of partial refinement upon a character, which certainly cannot boast of this as one of its visible ingredients. We are sometimes tempted to smile at the brazen visage with which the peasant marks his ignorance of distinctions; at his unaltered stare; his unblushing effrontery and his rough repartees; yet, the impression which the sight most commonly conveys, is painful rather than pleasing in its nature and effects. For, after all, could we carry our ideas to the probable consequences of the continuance and increase of such a form of things; could we consider in its real light the desolation of a state of society, where neither talent, nor power, nor authority, nor wealth, could raise above the level of common equality; the thought would leave ample room not for joyful, but melancholy reflection. For what

does man labor in those walks of active duty, which the lot of providence has assigned him to tread, but to build to himself a perpetuity of fame, founded upon those artificial distinctions which the Deity has established between men, though common in their species, and similar in nature, formation, and end? It is just and proper, that the powers of intellectual greatness should receive that homage which is so unequivocally their due; that the low should pay some obeisance to the high; the unlearned to the wise; the vulgar to the refined; and the little to the great.

It is upon these grounds that the line of barbarity which casts a shade over the national character of the American people, should not find so many admirers among the inhabitants of the land. An addition of zeal for every honorable cause; of diligence in seconding the efforts of those

who are struggling for laudable ends; of anxiety for the success of the good and the great; to that stern and enterprizing spirit which they at present profess; would increase the ~~glory~~ ~~of~~ of the republic, without derogating one tittle from its ~~the~~ independence. But as long as this deadly apathy chills the current of natural feeling; while the nation, enveloped in the mantle of conceited pride, ~~palsies~~ general exertion, and ~~leaves~~ ~~efforts~~ to ~~the~~ end where they began; a large portion will be wanting to complete the sum of ~~the~~ its renown. ~~We~~ ~~may be admired~~ for our valor on the ocean, and our atchievements in arms; for our energy in commerce, and our activity in action; may furnish themes of admiration to all, but they can never endear us to

any: we may be feared as long as we are great, but till we are social, we never can be loved.

Q.